

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 5
By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mrs. Martha Henderson Ashe, former State Senator from Knox County, lately of Hobe Sound, Florida.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Martha Henderson Ashe, former Tennessee State Senator from Knox County, and mother of former State Senator Victor Ashe; and

WHEREAS, Martha Ashe was an exemplary public servant, civic activist and businesswoman who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; she seamlessly combined those stellar attributes with those of a devoted wife and mother; and

WHEREAS, born January 24, 1912, in LaFollette, Tennessee, Martha Henderson moved at a young age to Knoxville, Tennessee, where she attended school before enrolling in Smith College in Massachusetts for two years; and

WHEREAS, Martha Henderson married Robert L. Ashe of Knoxville in 1937; the Ashes were the parents of four sons, two of whom reached adulthood and embarked upon distinguished careers; she was also the grandmother of J. Victor and Martha Ashe of Knoxville, Robert L. Ashe of Atlanta and Sally Ashe Wood of Silver Springs, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, elder son Lawrence Ashe became an attorney in Atlanta and was the first non African-American to serve as president of the Atlanta Urban League; son Victor succeeded to his mother's Senate seat, serving from 1975-84, served as Mayor of Knoxville for four terms and is currently the United States Ambassador to Poland; and

WHEREAS, following his last term in the Tennessee House of Representatives, son Victor won the August primary election to be the Republican candidate for State Senate from the Seventh District in Knox County; his candidacy was denied due to the provisions of the

Tennessee Constitution mandating that a candidate for the Senate be at least 30 years of age and he would not turn 30 until January 1, 1975, several weeks after the August 1, 1975 primary and the November 5, 1975 general elections; and

WHEREAS, Martha Ashe was then nominated by the Republican executive committee of Knox County and was placed on the ballot for the November general election. She won the election handily for the Seventh District Senate seat and was sworn into office on January 7, 1975; the same day she introduced a constitutional amendment to change the age requirement for State Senator and then resigned her seat; and

WHEREAS, on January 17, 1975, the Knox County Quarterly Court elected Victor Ashe to succeed to his mother's seat; he served with distinction for ten years; and

WHEREAS, Martha Ashe was the first woman to serve on the Board of Trustees of Carson Newman College in Jefferson City Tennessee, where in later years she sponsored an annual lecture series on Christianity; she was also the first public affairs director of WBIR TV in Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ashe served her fellow citizens in many ways, including as Governor Lamar Alexander's appointee to the Appellate Court Nominating Commission and as an elected delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1980 pledged to George H. W. Bush; and

WHEREAS, always appreciative of the beauty of nature, Martha Ashe promoted horticulture as President of the Garden Clubs in Knoxville and in Jupiter Island, Florida; for 30 years she operated an antique shop called Past and Present in Hobe Sound, Florida; and

WHEREAS, Martha H. Ashe leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant, civic activist, family matriarch and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Martha Henderson Ashe, reflecting fondly upon

her impeccable character, her great humanity, and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Martha Ashe.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.